

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-02 SSM-05
SIG-02 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 DODE-00 L-03 PA-02
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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:EOJONES:RGH
APPROVED BY NEA/P:EOJONES
S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)
H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA - MS. GRIFFIN
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH

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O 292245Z DEC 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
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AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
CINCEUR

UNCLAS STATE 312889

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL, CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - DECEMBER 29

1.
FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR
DECEMBER 29, 1976:

Q. WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT CLIFFORD'S SPEECH YESTER-
DAY?

A. ON YOUR SPECIFIC QUESTION (YESTERDAY), I THINK WHICH
DEALT WITH MR. CLIFFORD'S ASSERTION THERE ARE SOME
ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS NOT PUBLISHED IN THE NOVEMBER 20TH
RELEASE OF FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES, THAT
ALLEGEDLY SHOW CONFLICT BETWEEN THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND
THE WHITE HOUSE OVER THE RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL, I THINK YOU
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ASKED WHY THEY WERE NOT INCLUDED OR IF THEY WERE
PUBLISHED IN AN ADDENDUM TO THAT DOCUMENT. WE HAVE LOOKED
INTO IT AND I CAN GIVE YOU THE ANSWER AS FOLLOWS:

VOLUME 5, PART 2, 1948 OF THE FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE
UNITED STATES INCLUDES DOCUMENTS THAT SHOW IN SOME DETAIL
THE DIFFERENCES IN VIEW BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT AND THE
WHITE HOUSE ON THE PARTITION OF PALESTINE AND THE
RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL.

NOW, THE FOREIGN RELATIONS SERIES CANNOT INCLUDE EVERY
DOCUMENT THAT MIGHT BE RELEVANT; BUT WHAT IS
ATTEMPTED IS A SELECTION OF THOSE DOCUMENTS WHICH MOST
CLEARLY ILLUMINATE POLICY VIEWS, INCLUDING DIFFERENCES OF
VIEWS AND DECISIONS.

NOW, IN COMPILING THE 1948 VOLUME THERE WAS A SEARCH MADE
FOR A DOCUMENT THAT MR. CLIFFORD REFERRED TO WHICH IS A
RECORD OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN UNDER SECRETARY LOVETT
AND MR. CLIFFORD AND THEY APPARENTLY WERE UNABLE TO FIND
THAT, EITHER IN OUR FILES HERE OR IN MR. CLIFFORD'S
PAPERS IN THE TRUMAN LIBRARY. AND THERE IS NO ADDENDUM
TO THE 1948 VOLUME, WHICH IS THE ANSWER TO THE OTHER

QUESTION THERE.

Q. IF I COULD GO BACK TO THE PREVIOUS ISSUE HERE, YOU SPEAK ABOUT THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S PUBLICATION OF DOCUMENTS THAT SHOW IN DETAIL DIFFERENCES IN VIEWS BETWEEN THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE WHITE HOUSE.

A. YES.

Q. THE QUESTION THAT I WAS RAISING WAS NOT THAT THERE WERE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OFFICIALS AT THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT, WHICH ARE NORMAL IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCE, BUT THAT CLIFFORD IS CHARGING THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT, SOME OFFICIALS AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT,
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WERE SUBVERTING THE PRESIDENT'S POLICY, WHICH IS QUITE DIFFERENT. I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE AN ANSWER TO THAT, AS TO WHAT IS THE DEPARTMENT'S VIEW ON AN OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT DELIBERATELY CONTRAVENING PRESIDENTIAL POLICY. THIS IS WHAT HE IS SAYING. HE SAYS HE HAS DOCUMENTATION. THAT IS, MR. CLIFFORD HAS. IT IS NOT ONLY WITH RELATION TO ONE DOCUMENT, ONE CONVERSATION WITH MR. LOVETT IN WHICH MR. LOVETT COMES OUT QUITE WELL IN THIS. HE TURNED THE THING AROUND. BUT, ACCORDING TO CLIFFORD, AND I THINK ACCORDING TO THE -- I DON'T THINK THIS IS SHOWN IN THE FOREIGN RELATIONS VOLUME. WHAT I AM GETTING AT IS WHERE DOES THE DEPARTMENT STAND ON OFFICERS WHO DO THIS?

A. THESE ARE PUBLIC DOCUMENTS. MR. CLIFFORD AS A PRIVATE CITIZEN HAS MADE A SPEECH IN WHICH HE HAS MADE THESE ALLEGATIONS. I AM NOT GOING TO REPLY TO THEM OR OFFER YOU A COMMENT ON SOMETHING THAT IS REALLY A MATTER OF HISTORICAL RECORD GOING BACK 25 YEARS OR MORE.

Q. IS IT MERELY A COINCIDENCE THAT THE HONOR PAID TO MR. LOY HENDERSON, WHO IS SHOWN TO BE THE ARCH FOE OF ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL IN 1948, WAS HONORED AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME THAT THE VOLUME OF FOREIGN RELATIONS, WHICH SHOWED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE U.S. POLICY AND THE PARTITION OF PALESTINE, CAME WITHIN A WEEK OR TWO APART OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT? WAS THAT ONLY A COINCIDENCE, OR WAS IT SOME KIND OF AN INDICATION TO SOMEBODY THAT MR. HENDERSON'S RECORD, AS FAR AS SOME PEOPLE IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS CONCERNED, IS IMPECCABLE?

A. IT WAS NOT AN INDICATION OF ANYTHING LIKE THAT. THE HONOR TO MR. HENDERSON WAS -- AS I SAID YESTERDAY -- IN RECOGNITION OF LONG AND VALUABLE SERVICE TO HIS COUNTRY. THERE WAS NO INTENTION IN PUBLISHING THAT PARTICULAR VOLUME OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO DO WHAT YOU ARE REFERRING TO.
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IT WAS COMPLETE COINCIDENCE, AND I WOULD FURTHER NOT ACCEPT YOUR PREMISE THAT MR. HENDERSON WAS DISLOYAL IN HIS OPPOSITION POLICY REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ISRAEL IN THE FORTIES.

Q. IT WASN'T A QUESTION OF DISLOYALTY. IT'S A QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT, AS I ASKED -- AND I STILL DON'T HAVE AN ANSWER -- AS TO WHETHER OR NOT AN OFFICIAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE CAN WILLFULLY SUBVERT THE PRESIDENT'S POLICY ON ANY ISSUE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

THIS COMES OUT CLEARLY IN BOTH THE STATE DEPARTMENT RECORDS AND IN MR. CLIFFORD'S SUMMATION OF THE PERIOD YESTERDAY AFTERNOON.

A. I JUST CANNOT ACCEPT YOUR PREMISE THAT THIS IS WILLFUL SUBVERSION OF THE PRESIDENT'S POLICY. OBVIOUSLY, THERE ARE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION.

Q. WILL YOU CALL IT SUBVERSION?

A. EXCUSE ME?

Q. WILL YOU CALL IT SUBVERSION?

A. I WON'T CALL IT ANYTHING. I REALLY --

Q. WILL YOU SAY --

A. -- AM NOT INFORMED ENOUGH ON THE SUBJECT TO BE ABLE TO

DISCUSS IT WITH YOU. I AM SIMPLY SAYING --

Q. WELL, THIS IS EXACTLY THE POINT. I ASKED IT YESTERDAY AND THERE WAS 24 HOURS -- THERE WAS PLENTY OF UNCLASSIFIED

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TIME TO CHECK THE TRUMAN LIBRARY TO CHECK ON CLIFFORD'S DOCUMENTATION BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT. WHY WASN'T THERE TIME IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT, WITH ALL ITS RESOURCES, TO SEE WHETHER OR NOT HENDERSON ACTUALLY DID ACT CONTRARY TO THE PRESIDENTIAL POLICY IN 1948?

A. YOU ARE ASKING ME A SORT OF A "HAVE YOU STOPPED BEATING YOUR WIFE?" QUESTION. I DO NOT AGREE THAT THERE HAS BEEN TIME -- ASSUMING THAT WE COULD SERIOUSLY FOLLOW UP AND MAKE A STUDY OF THIS -- THERE HAS NOT BEEN TIME TO MAKE A JUDGMENT OF THAT KIND OF MAGNITUDE.

Q. WELL, ARE YOU SAYING NOW THAT YOU WILL HAVE TIME IN THE FUTURE TO MAKE SUCH A JUDGMENT?

A. NO, I AM NOT SAYING THAT.

Q. THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS DROPPING THIS SUBJECT ABOUT HENDERSON'S RECORD IN 1948?

A. I AM NOT AWARE THAT WE WERE EVER SEIZED WITH IT. MR. CLIFFORD IS SEIZED WITH IT.

Q. WELL, NOT ONLY MR. CLIFFORD. THE DOCUMENTATION OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHOWS IT ON THE HONOR PAID TO MR. HENDERSON. YOU SAID A LOYAL CITIZEN TO HIS COUNTRY-- OF VALUED SERVICE TO HIS COUNTRY. WELL, I DON'T DISPUTE THAT BY WHAT HE WAS THINKING, BUT HE'S AN OFFICIAL OF THE GOVERNMENT. AN OFFICIAL OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH IS RESPONSIBLE TO THE PRESIDENT.

DID HE SHOW RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PRESIDENT IN HIS POSITION? THIS IS THE QUESTION THAT I'M ASKING ABOUT MR. HENDERSON.

A. LOOK, I CAN ONLY REPEAT: THESE ARE PUBLIC DOCUMENTS; UNCLASSIFIED

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THEY REFER TO A TIME PERIOD SOME YEARS AGO. I THINK IT'S UP TO -- IF YOU WANT TO MAKE YOUR OWN JUDGMENT OF WHAT OCCURRED THEN, THAT IS UP TO YOU; BUT I AM NOT GOING TO ARGUE WITH YOU ABOUT WHAT OUR JUDGMENT IS OF WHAT MR. HENDERSON DID OR DID NOT DO.

Q. ONE MORE QUESTION ABOUT THE CLIFFORD/HENDERSON FOREIGN RELATIONS BOOK AND SO ON: IS THE STATE DEPART-

MENT PLANNING, OR WILL IT PUBLISH THE DOCUMENTATION RELATING TO WHAT CLIFFORD SAID WERE THE OPINIONS BY THE LEGAL ADVISER'S OFFICE AND THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY OFFICE IN THE UN CHARTER GROUP THAT EXAMINED THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN 1948 THAT WERE DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSITE, APPARENTLY, OR WERE OPPOSITE TO WHAT THE HENDERSON VIEW PROPOSED BUT WERE NEVER MADE KNOWN TO SECRETARY MARSHALL OR TO THE PRESIDENT -- OR TO THE WHITE HOUSE?

A. YOUR QUESTION IS: WILL THE DEPARTMENT PUBLISH THESE?

Q. PUBLISH THEM OR MAKE -- YES, PUBLISH THEM.

A. IN THE FOREIGN RELATIONS SERIES?

Q. WELL, PUBLISH THEM SOME WAY -- AS AN ADDENDUM OR TO

MAKE THEM --

A. THE ONLY ANSWER I CAN GIVE YOU IS THAT --

Q. PLUS REASONING AS TO WHY THEY WEREN'T INCORPORATED.

A. THE ONLY ANSWER I CAN GIVE YOU IS WHAT I ALREADY SAID EARLIER, THAT IS, THAT THE FOREIGN RELATIONS SERIES CANNOT INCLUDE EVERY RELEVANT DOCUMENT. BUT THEY TRY TO INCLUDE SIGNIFICANT DOCUMENTS THAT ILLUMINATE VIEWS AND DIFFERENCES OF VIEWS.

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Q. WELL, THE POINT IS THAT CLIFFORD MADE AN ISSUE OF THE FACT THAT THESE DOCUMENTS WERE NOT REPORTED TO THE WHITE HOUSE OR TO THE SECRETARY; AND THERE IS A DISTINCTION HERE BETWEEN CLIFFORD'S JUDGMENT AND THE JUDGMENT OF THE EDITOR OF THE VOLUME.

I'M ASKING NOW, IN THE LIGHT OF CLIFFORD'S REMARKS, WHETHER OR NOT THE STATE DEPARTMENT WILL MAKE THEM AVAILABLE.

A. I AM NOT AWARE THAT THERE ARE ANY PLANS TO DO SO.

Q. BUT WILL YOU LOOK INTO IT AND SEE?

A. I WILL TRY, YES.

Q. DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT THE REPORT OF BOEING OVERSEAS -- THE PAYOFF? IS IT TRUE?

A. ALL I CAN SAY -- YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT A REPORT IN THE

WALL STREET JOURNAL YESTERDAY --

Q. YES.

A. -- THAT THE DEPARTMENT WAS CONSIDERING FILING A REQUEST IN THIS CASE -- THIS BOEING CASE -- THAT CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BE KEPT UNDER SEAL?

I DO NOT REALLY HAVE A REPLY FOR YOU, OTHER THAN TO SAY THAT THE MATTER IS UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE DEPARTMENT BUT NO DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN AS TO WHETHER THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD MAKE ANY SUGGESTION TO THE COURT.

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IF THE DEPARTMENT DECIDES TO MAKE A SUGGESTION, IT WILL NATURALLY BE MADE PUBLIC AT THE TIME -- ONLY AT THE

TIME -- THE APPROPRIATE PAPERS ARE FILED IN THE COURT.

Q. WHY DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT WANT THESE PAPERS TO BE KEPT SECRET?

A. I AM SORRY? WHY?

Q. YES.

A. I SAID WE HAVE NOT MADE A DECISION AS TO WHETHER TO MAKE A SUGGESTION, SO I REALLY CANNOT ANSWER THE QUESTION.

Q. THANK YOU.

Q. CAN YOU COMMENT ON THE REPORT ABOUT THE CHANGE OF POLICY BY THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT CONCERNING THE JEWISH COMMUNITY?

A. YOU MEAN THE REPORT THAT FULL CIVIL RIGHTS HAVE BEEN RESTORED TO SYRIAN JEWS OR JEWS LIVING IN SYRIA?

Q. YES.

A. I DO NOT HAVE ANY INFORMATION THAT SPECIFICALLY CONFIRMS THAT PARTICULAR REPORT. WE ARE AWARE THAT THERE HAS BEEN SOME IMPROVEMENT IN THE CONDITIONS OF LIFE FOR MINORITY GROUPS, INCLUDING JEWS, IN SYRIA OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS; AND, OF COURSE, WE WELCOME THAT TREND.

2. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS POSTED IN THE DEPARTMENT PRESS OFFICE IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION TAKEN AT

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DECEMBER 23RD BRIEFING:

Q. WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SUIT INVOLVING MR. HILMI, DIRECTOR OF THE ARAB INFORMATION CENTER IN NEW YORK?

A. ON NOVEMBER 8 AMBASSADOR HILMI WAS DISMISSED BY THE COURT AS A DEFENDANT IN A PENDING SUIT AGAINST THE ARAB INFORMATION OFFICE IN RESPONSE TO THE FILING BY THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT OF A SUGGESTION OF IMMUNITY. THE FILING FOLLOWED A DETERMINATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE THAT AMBASSADOR HILMI HAS DIPLOMATIC STATUS.

ROBINSON

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 16 SEP 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, PRESS CONFERENCES, BRIEFING MATERIALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE312889
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/P:EOJONES:RGH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D760475-0710
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761293/baaaerda.tel
Line Count: 378
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: vogelfj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 JUN 2004 by chengls>; APPROVED <27 DEC 2004 by vogelfj>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - DECEMBER 29
TAGS: PFOR, US
To: DAMASCUS
TEL AVIV
MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006